



On Categorizing Human Beings based on Immigration Status

December 2025/Kislev 5785 | Rabbi Aaron Brusso

A flood is an existentially challenging event because it sweeps away the artifice of our citizenship in this world.

The most important things that separate us from nature are not indoor plumbing and ergonomic remote controls.

What separates us is our ability to make distinctions that floods cannot make. We can see individual human beings, hear their stories, know their souls and know in our hearts what is right and good and just.

Vayavdel ben ha'mayim asher m'tachat ha'rakea. "God separated the waters from the heavens." God makes distinctions and gifted us the ability to do the same. What makes us human, what distinguishes us from the flood, is our ability to make physical and moral distinctions.

Sending people away in a flood of indiscriminate actions does not make use of our unique human ability to make fine distinctions.

What it does is make us feel more at home, more rooted in a place we feel we belong. A place where we now know we belong because of the fact that others do not belong. When we use civilization to make us feel more at home at the expense of others we become the flood we fear.